

*Tours fire-damaged Springfield buildings with local business and municipal leaders*

Springfield, VT - Rep. Peter Welch joined representatives from the Southern Vermont Health and Recreation Center (SVHRC) to announce \$121,000 in federal funding he recently secured.

The funding will support the Recreation Center's highly successful community health programs.

"I am pleased this federal support will help the Recreation Center continue to improve their community health and wellness programs. The center provides an invaluable service to the region and serves thousands of area residents young and old," said Welch.

Welch added, "My goal is to help match federal support with priorities identified by communities around the state."

Joining Welch was former State Senator Edgar May, SVHRC's Executive Director Christian Craig, Chair of the SVHRC Board George Lamb, SVHRC Board Member Bob Flint, and other members of the community.

Craig said, "This funding will allow the Southern Vermont Health and Recreation Center expand key health improvement components of the facility. This support will allow us to better serve area residents. A recent membership survey revealed that 84 percent of members felt their health has improved since joining the facility."

Welch visited the SVHRC early last year and saw first hand the needs of the center. He followed up on his visit with a request for federal support.

SVHRC serves 2,130 members from 35 area communities. The center is open over 95 hours per week and one-third of the membership is under the age of 18.

The SVHRC offers The Prescription for Exercise Program, which allows area physicians or school nurses the ability to refer patients to the Recreation Center for a program designed to teach people how to exercise and improve their cardiovascular system.

With the support of other grants, the Recreation Center was also able to install the largest thermal solar energy system in the state, producing 175,000 kWh of energy in its first year and saving 9,722 gallons of propane.

The funding was originally secured by Welch in the House version of the 2008 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Bill.

Following the funding announcement, Welch visited the fire-damaged Springfield Theater Building and Lincoln Block Building with local business leaders and town representatives.